



NORTH COLUMBIA MASTER PLAN

Workshop Results
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in Association with Jordan, Jones & Goulding

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It is a pleasure to provide the North Columbia Coordinating Committee, the Eau Claire Development Corporation, and the City of Columbia a summary findings of the **North Columbia Neighborhoods Take-Part Community Design Workshop** conducted June 11 and 25, 2005 at Columbia College. This was a people's workshop where the neighborhood residents, businesspersons and City officials came together to discuss and analyze their concerns for the present and future needs of the North Columbia area. This report contains the results of the "Take-Part" workshop's findings – good and bad. It tells the story of how concerned citizens analyzed their community and put together a very pragmatic and positive approach for implementation. A North Columbia master Land Use Plan. The **"Findings"** contains verbatim responses and suggested solutions as to what must be done. These responses have been reproduced exactly as written with no editorial changes in phrasing or spelling in order to avoid misunderstandings in their interpretation. Similar or duplicate responses have been deleted from the text.

The findings of the workshop are a major benchmark in the first steps of a long awaited desire of North Columbia citizens to participate in having a comprehensive Master Land Use Plan. This summary report serves as a record to that fact.

The success of a proposed user-oriented plan will depend on the continued open dialogue between North Columbia residents/business people and city officials.

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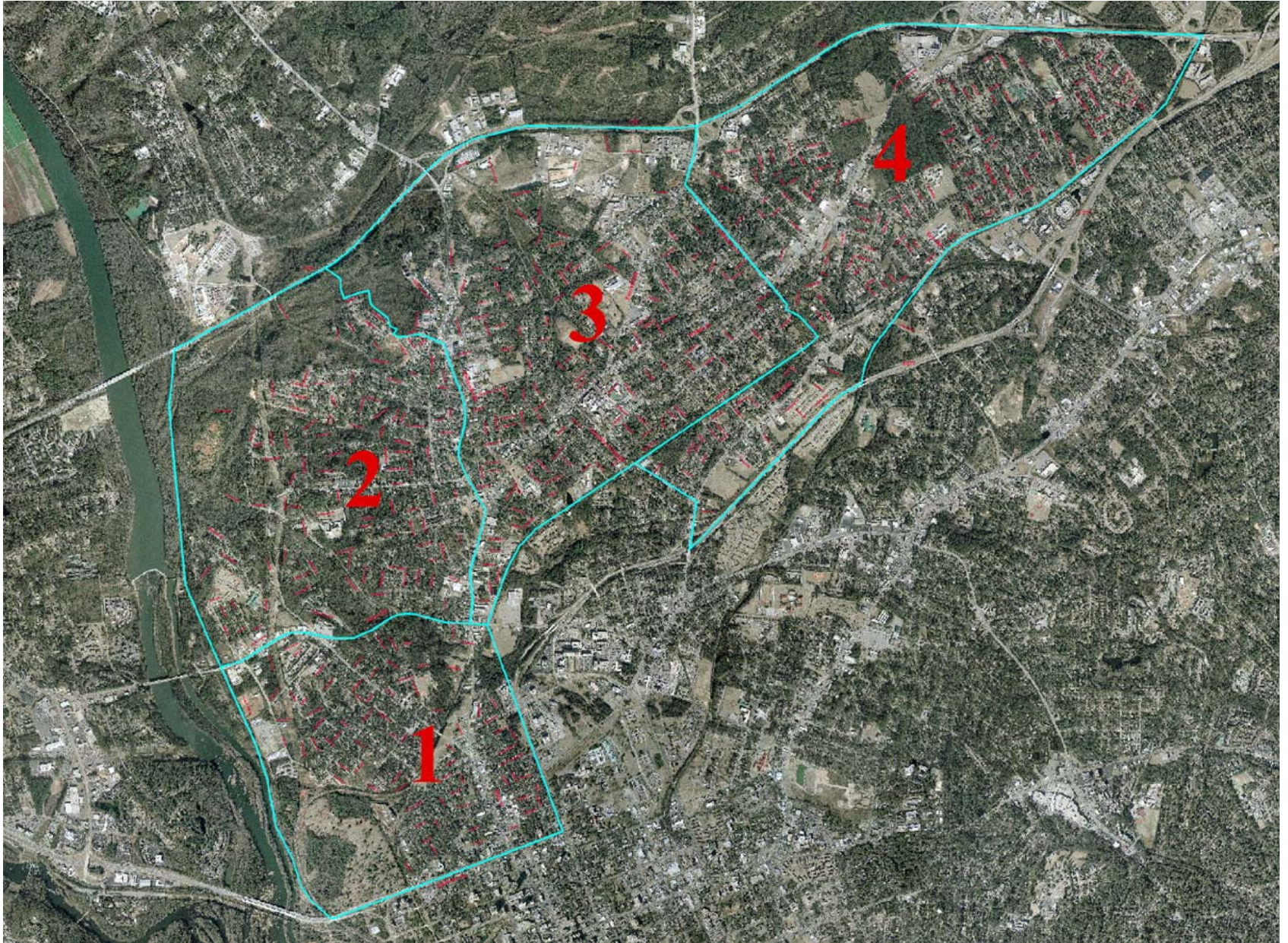
INTRODUCTION



Introduction

On June 11, 2005 and June 25, 2005, residents of the North Columbia area of Columbia South Carolina came together to create the future vision for their community. Due to the size of the area and amount of participants, the project area was divided into four clusters or groupings of neighborhoods based along geographical boundaries. The following pages present the process and results of these workshops.

North Columbia Master Plan



Project Area

The North Columbia Master Plan area is located just north of the Central Business District of Columbia SC. Beginning at Elmwood Ave and heading north towards Interstate 20, the project area is a diverse mixture of traditional in-town neighborhoods, first generation suburban communities, neglected commercial corridors, colleges, worship centers, industrial uses and beautiful city parks. The project area, bounded by the Farrow Rd to the east and the Broad River to the west, is a total of approximately 4,000 acres and includes more than 27 neighborhood associations.

Existing Conditions

The existing conditions of these neighborhoods within the project area vary greatly within a few blocks of one another. Some neighborhoods such as Elmwood Park and Seminary Ridge are in good condition with beautiful tree-lined streets, renovated old homes and well maintained yards and public spaces, while some neighborhoods such as Belmont Acres and Golden Acres have suffered from years of suburban flight, minimal economic input and non-compatible land-use developments. Conditions within neighborhoods can vary greatly as well. College Place has many well maintained grand old homes that are a block from dilapidated duplexes and apartments. The neighborhoods of Greenview and North Columbia have larger lots with good tree cover but are beginning to feel the negative pressures from the less prestigious neighborhoods of Farrow Hills and Farrow Terrace just blocks away. The majority of higher-end businesses along N. Main St, Sunset Dr, and Fairfield Rd have long since departed for bigger and newer malls in the suburbs and have been replaced with lower-end tenants or no tenants at all. Farrow Rd has turned into a transportation corridor for commuters trying to beat traffic out of the city.

Design Process

The Take-Part Workshop is a design process that brings together residents, business owners and community leaders with designers and city staff to develop a plan to address the future growth within the community. The Take-Part Workshop is a two step process:

Step One-Visual Preference Survey:

The Visual Preference survey shows a series of images regarding potential land uses and design elements that may or may not be appropriate for the area. The residents are asked to identify their preferred image. These images are not only for general land uses but also for specific traffic corridors and intersections. Following the visual component of the survey, residents responded to series of questions regarding existing conditions and future growth within their community. The results are then tabulated to identify the resident's preferred vision for their community.

Step Two-Planning Session:

Following the visual preference survey, residents are asked to participate in a “table” top planning session. Grouped with adjacent neighborhoods, residents are divided into four smaller groups that walk through the planning process with designers and city staff. Issues discussed are the positive and negative attributes within their community and what basic services are needed and where they might go. The residents then formulate a plan by identifying where different kinds of land uses are to be located. In addition, residents are asked to target areas in need of redevelopment and what these “spaces” might look like. These plans are then presented back to the community by a resident spokesperson.

This plan, along with the results from the visual preference survey becomes the framework for the North Columbia Master Plan.

Following the Take-Part Workshop, the project Coordinating Committee meets with the designers and city staff to review results from the visual preference survey and study the concept plans by the participants. The coordinating Committee then makes recommendations to the design team based on the information produced from the workshop in creating a community master plan.